DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 192 066 CE 026 549

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TITLE We Know Co-op Work Experiences Work--Buy Why?
PUB DATE [80]
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Co-op Employer Appreciation Dinner (Erie, PA, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Cooperative Education; Cooperative Programs; Educational Objectives; Individual Needs; *Need Gratification; *Program Effectiveness; Psychological Needs; Secondary Education; Self Actualization; *Student Motivation; *Student Needs; Success; Work Experience Programs
IDENTIFIERS Herzberg (Frederick); Maslow (Abraham)

ABSTRACT

An examination of why cooperative work experiences work in light of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's satisfaction and dissatisfaction factors can be helpful in maintaining and improving the experiences. Cooperative work experiences are successful because they satisfy two types of student needs (deficiency needs and growth needs). These experiences fulfill deficiency needs (physicological, security, belonging, and esteem needs) by enabling students to acquire the vocational skills and experience necessary to earn decent salaries and help insure job security by enabling students to enjoy the recognition and rights of tradespersons and by providing tangible products and advisible skills which help students meet their esteem needs. It is only after these deficiency needs are met that students will be motivated by growth needs (aesthetics, self-actualization, and knowledge and understanding). Therefore, co-op employers and votech personnel must help students gratify their deficiency needs. Students should help their fellow students, co-op employers, and votech instructors meet their own deficiency needs as well. While meeting deficiency needs prevents student dissatisfaction, only the meeting of growth needs can provide student satisfaction. Therefore, co-op employers and votech personnel must help students meet both needs and should stress the latter. Students should also assume more responsibility in evaluating their vocation and co-op job site in light of motivational factors. (MN)

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We Know Co-op Work Experiences Work -- But Why?

Cooperative work experiences usually work so effectively that one might be inclined to let well enough alone and not bother to ask why. If one does not ask why though, there is little hope of maintaining such successful programs, let alone planning for future improvements.

Although it is obvious that successful co-op work experiences do not just come about by themselves, it may be less obvious that they do not come about just due to dedication and hard work. Recognized or not, like it or not, there is theory behind lasting, successful cooperative work programs.

The author will identify and explain two theories he believes underlie the success of co-op work experiences. He will then offer suggestions to co-op employers, to vocational technical school personnel, and to co-op students as to how they can use the theories to, not only maintain, but improve the experiences.

Students participating in co-op work experiences appear to be both highly motivated and satisfied. But why?

The author believes people are motivated from within as they seek to gratify needs they perceive as being unmet. These unmet needs 'drive' people to interact with their environment in order to meet these needs. As long as these

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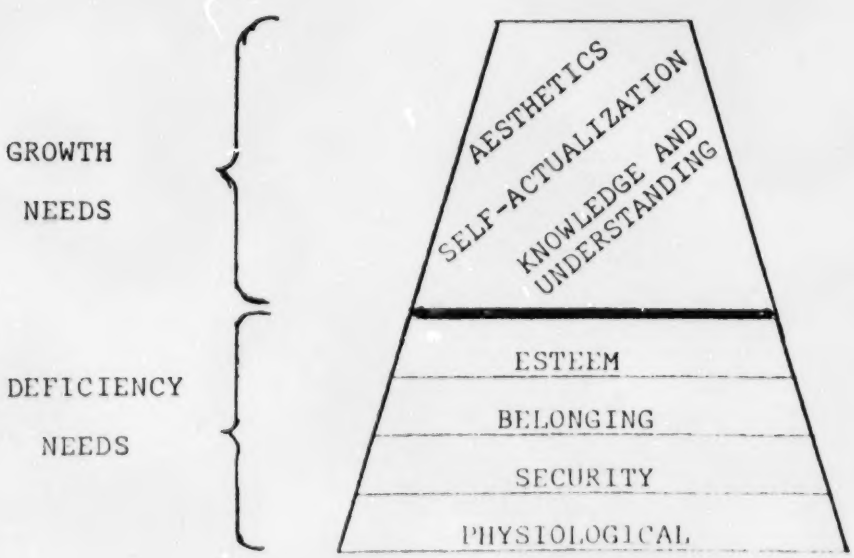
needs are perceived to be unmet, they have the capacity to motivate. Once a particular need is met it no longer has the capacity to motivate. Therefore, it is the perception that a given need is unmet, not the actual meeting of that same need, that is motivating.

Maslow (1970) saw human needs, both innate and acquired, as energizers to explain motivation. He saw these human needs falling into a hierarchy whereby lower needs are prepotent to higher needs. A person must perceive these lower needs to be either met or well on their way to being met before attention can be paid to higher needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs and their grouping into deficiency and growth categories can be displayed as follows in Figure 1.

Figure 1.
HIERARCHY OF NEEDS (MASLOW, 1970)



Given Maslow's theory, how does it help explain the success of co-op work experiences? The first four levels of the hierarchy are the easiest to explain and are the categories of needs most often used to motivate co-op students. For the present the focus will be on these four levels. The remaining levels are more difficult to explain and are much less often consciously used as a source of motivation.

As an innate or primary need, all people need to survive, need to maintain their physiological well-being. All people need food, water, and shelter. Connected to the co-op experience is both the receiving of money and the promise of continued, if not even more, money in the future for services rendered. In our society these monetary rewards can help the co-op students acquire the necessities of survival.

The acquisition of votech skills and the experience gained through co-op help insure present and future job security due to both the demand and mobility of such skills. Thus the security need, knowledge that tomorrow is predictable and somewhat under one's control, is helped to be met.

The confirmation by both one's peers and votech personnel of a title such as 'machinist', 'cosmotologist', or 'welder', as well as the recognition by the co-op employer that these votech students enjoy all the rights and priviledges of tradespersons is a feeling of belonging that college bound students must wait at least four years to experience. So still another need is helped to be met by the co-op work experience.

The visibility of both the skills acquired and the tangible products produced allow the co-op students to be recognized for their special talents as they exist uninfluenced by tenure or seniority. Recognition of being someone special, of making a unique contribution, of being able to handle responsibility, and of being able to work independently are all fostered in successful co-op work experiences. These same characteristics contribute to helping the students meet their esteem need.

As shown in Figure 1, these needs can be grouped into two categories -- deficiency needs and growth needs. As differentiated by Biehler (1974), both categories of needs can explain motivation but with some key differences including:

1. Deficiency motivation leads to a sense of relief, whereas growth motivation leads to a desire for further fulfillment.

   Example - "Whew! I am glad I got that raise, I really worked for it," or "I do not know what I would have done if I had not gotten into the union," characterize deficiency motivation. "It is too bad this job is over, I found it to be really challenging," characterizes growth motivation.

2. Deficiency needs can only be satisfied by others, whereas growth needs are satisfied more autonomously.

   Example - Attaining a raise, acceptance by peers, job security, as well as all other deficit needs, are dependent upon the grace of others. A sense of

> dependence and seeing others as only need gratifiers is encouraged. Doing a job well, not just to secure a place in the company or to earn a bonus, but just because one's personal standards demand such quality work, needs no 'other' to act as judge. A sense of independence and seeing others as persons in and of themselves is developed. By their very nature of being 'other' directed, the meeting of a worker's deficiency needs requires constant supervision. Growth needs create a motivational drive that does not require such supervision.

It is only through the students perceiving these deficiency needs to be met that they will be ready to be motivated by growth needs -- becoming the best person they are capable of, acquiring an epistemic curiosity about aspects of their trade, and developing aesthetic appreciations. As these co-op workers are motivated to become the best they are capable of becoming, in their own idiosyncratic way, this achieved potential in turn profits the employer directly and society indirectly.

Much theory, including the theory described above, is often unknowingly practiced in co-op work experiences. A recognition of underlying theories and a conscious attempt to regularly apply such theories is more effective and thus more productive. In consciously applying Maslow's theory, one should keep in mind two limitations.

Firstly, deficiency needs are not something 'to get over and then forget about' in anticipation of using growth needs solely as a basis for motivation. Deficiency needs may appear to be met, but they are episodic and must be attended to over and over again on a periodic basis. One may feel full after breakfast, but one is usually motivated to eat one or two more times before the day is over. One may feel secure with this year's raise and fringe benefit package, yet a year later this same salary and fringe benefit package no longer meets one's security needs.

Secondly, meeting one's deficiency needs does not guarantee an individual will now be motivated by growth needs. Although the theory suggests most people are not capable of becoming self-actualized until in their mid-thirties, the success of the co-op work experience in helping students perceive their deficiency needs as being met may make the votech student more ready than the typical high school student to begin being motivated by growth needs.

If one accepts Maslow's hierarchial structure of needs, where lower needs must be attended to first, then one should be aware of the roles that could be played by those involved in co-op work experiences.

Co-op employers and votech personnel have the major control over those factors students require to gratify their deficiency needs. Therefore, the responsibility of continually helping the students meet these deficiency needs and of getting them ready to be motivated by growth needs, which are

continuous and never ending, rests heavily upon the shoulders of these employers and educators.

Co-op students are in control of dispensing those factors which can help their fellow students, BUT NOT THEMSELVES, meet their deficiency needs. Opportunities for students to help one another meet their deficiency needs exist both in the votech school training lab and in most successful co-op work experiences.

Finally, co-op students are also in control of dispensing those factors which can help their co-op employers and votech instructors meet their own deficiency needs. Co-op employers and votech instructors are as susceptible to this human needs hierarchy as anyone. They too must be made to feel secure, to belong, and to have a positive self-esteem.

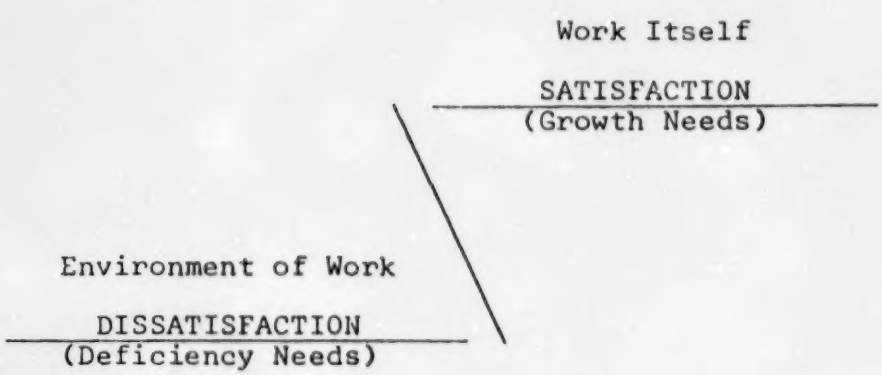
So, is the answer to how to have motivated and satisfied co-op students, and thus the ingredients of a successful co-op experience, one of making sure the students' deficiency needs are met? Yes and no. Yes the co-op students would be motivated, but they would not necessarily be satisfied.

According to Herzberg (1959), meeting deficiency needs would only result in workers no longer being dissatisfied. It does not cause them to be satisfied. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not at opposite ends of a continuum where 'no longer being one suggests you are now more of the other.' i.e., If you are no longer heavy you must be lighter. If you are no longer short you must be taller. As shown in Figure 2, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are on two different planes.

Being no longer dissatisfied may at best only set the stage for being satisfied, it does not result in satisfaction. One could have a very motivated co-op student who is not satisfied but is only no longer dissatisfied. The more desirable situation would be to have the co-op student be both motivated and satisfied.

Figure 2.

MUTUAL EXCLUSIVENESS OF SATISFACTION AND DISSATISFACTION
(Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1971, P. 144)



If satisfaction and dissatisfaction are on two different planes, then what are the factors votech instructors and co-op employers can vary to help the co-op student be first, no longer dissatisfied, and second, be satisfied?

Table 1 reinforces Herzberg's hypothesis that satisfaction factors and dissatisfaction factors are mutually exclusive. Satisfaction factors or satisfiers are found in the work itself, whereas dissatisfaction factors or dissatisfiers are found in the environment of work.

Table 1.

SATISFACTION AND DISSATISFACTION FACTORS
(Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1971, P. 145)

Satisfiers (Found in the work itself)	
Achievement	Responsibility
Recognition	Advancement
Work itself	
Dissatisfiers (Found in the environment of work)	
Salary	
Possibility of growth	
Interpersonal relations (subordinates)	
Interpersonal relations (superiors)	
Interpersonal relations (peers)	
Company policy and administration	
Working conditions	
Job security	

Herzberg's dissatisfiers, such as salary and working conditions, have the power to cause dissatisfaction when not present in the quantity or quality desired by workers. Maslow would label these dissatisfiers as deficit needs. An increased salary or an improvement in working conditions does not cause the workers to be satisfied, it only causes them to no longer be dissatisfied with these factors of the work environment. Satisfiers, or growth needs as Maslow would label them, such as the challenge of the work and the recognition of

achievement are found in the work itself and have the potential to produce satisfaction.

If one accepts Herzberg's theory of mutually exclusive factors being responsible for satisfaction and dissatisfaction in workers, then one should be aware here, as with Maslow's theory, of the roles that could be played by those involved in co-op work experiences.

Co-op employers and votech personnel should use this theory to assist co-op students in, first of all, becoming no longer dissatisfied, and second of all, becoming satisfied in their work experiences. Co-op work stations do not appear to have any particular advantage over other work stations (the mass of jobs entered by both unskilled labor and college trained persons) in attending to reducing one's dissatisfaction with the work environment. Workers expect, as a minimum, a decent salary, a fair implementation of company policies, reasonable relationships with co-workers, and safe working conditions.

Votech co-op work experiences do seem to have an advantage over other work experiences in providing opportunities for the co-op worker to become satisfied. Again, the visibility of both the skills acquired and the tangible products produced by the co-op student lend themselves to early recognition, to receiving immediate corrective feedback resulting in further achievement, to creating a product that is a visible reflection of one's pride in the work itself, and to being given as much responsibility as soon as one feels ready

to accept it.

Co-op employers and votech personnel should stress to their co-op students and to the general public the satisfaction aspect of their trade. It is being done now but not nearly enough. The votech trades lend themselves so well to the work itself being satisfying that, perhaps due to being so commonplace, this aspect of the trade is taken too much for granted. Certainly valid information about high salaries, fringe benefits, job security, and working conditions should be conveyed to the co-op students and to the general public, but these factors should be kept in a proper perspective. Co-op students should be made aware of the limitations of these factors -- to, at best, reduce dissatisfaction. It is certainly true that these factors capture the attention of listeners, but such attention is shallow and fleeting. Factors affecting one's satisfaction accounts for persistence and substance.

Finally, co-op students should assume more responsibility for evaluating their vocation and co-op job site in light of the factors responsible for both satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This should be an ongoing conscious effort on their part. They should be encouraged to communicate their assessment of these factors to one another, to their co-op employer, to the votech personnel, and to the general public. Co-op students should be encouraged to look beyond the dollar sign while, at the same time, keeping it in sight. A probing conversation with any motivated and satisfied tradespersons would

certainly reveal they have.

Co-op work experiences work, but why? If successful programs depend upon motivated and satisfied participants, then the theories of Maslow and Herzberg apply. Why should one be aware of the theories? Even if done unintentionally, all workers including co-op workers follow Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's satisfaction and dissatisfaction factors. Thus, the theories operate irregardless of one's recognition of them. Let us recognize and understand the theories underlying successful co-op work experiences and then go on to make the theories work for us in a planned, purposeful manner.

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